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**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON CENSUSES OF THE STATISTICAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF ECLAC**

**CONTENTS**

	<i><b>Page</b></i>
1. Members of the working group.....	3
2. Summary of the objectives and goals .....	3
3. Description of the activities carried out by the working group.....	4
3.1. Workshops and seminars .....	4
3.1. Observation of pilot tests and censuses of the 2010 round .....	9
3.2. Other activities .....	11
4. Future areas of activity.....	12

## **1. Members of the working group**

Member countries: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

Coordinating country: Paraguay

## **2. Summary of the objectives and goals**

The general goals set out in the 2010-2011 programme were to promote and implement initiatives for assisting countries with the planning and conduct of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses.

These general goals will be achieved by means of the following specific goals: To promote and implement activities aimed, among other things, at training, sharing experiences in census management and operation, harmonization of the technology used to capture and process census data, and information analysis and dissemination.

The Working Group on Censuses of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC is supported by four subgroups, each covering a different area: methodology (Paraguay), processing and technology (Brazil), mapping (Mexico) and dissemination (Colombia).

Among other goals, the activities detailed in the work plan were aimed at training, sharing experiences in census management and operation, the harmonization of conceptual design and content, and information analysis and dissemination. With regard to harmonization, the workshop on harmonization of a minimum set of questions on disability was converted into a nomenclature activity, since the subject of disability was deemed to have been sufficiently debated during the corresponding meetings organized by ECLAC. The activity on Afro-descendent peoples did not go ahead.

The activities of the working group, along with the participation in them, depended on the stage of development of countries' respective censuses and their ability to capitalize as efficiently as possible on the experiences and knowledge-sharing.

The activities scheduled for the period 2009-2011 were carried out satisfactorily, as planned and with assistance from the established authorities. These activities had been suggested, prioritized and agreed with the countries on the basis of the survey conducted by ECLAC in 2009 on the current status of the 2010 census round.

Coordination of the Working Group on Censuses involved ongoing communication with the reference countries of the subgroups and the member countries, including consultations on implementing activities and the respective evaluations so as to make any necessary adjustments. A flow of communication has been maintained with the technical secretariat of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC, which have been a constant source of support.

The reference countries of each subgroup have provided technical, logistical and organizational support for the events. Ad hoc task forces were set up and, using information and communications technology, collaborated closely to plan, develop and execute the scheduled activities. High levels of

commitment and cooperation have been observed among national statistical offices in the region and a close relationship has been forged with their technical staff.

International organizations, in particular the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its country offices, worked to help ensure that activities were coordinated and complementary, as illustrated by the technical and financial support provided for the group to carry out its programme in 2010.

Without a doubt, delivering workshops and seminars, sharing experiences, and providing technical assistance for the 2010 census round all help to develop the technical and operational potential of national statistical offices in the region; these activities provide an opportunity to assess, approve and expand the conceptual, logistical and operational framework for conducting censuses.

With the support of the participating countries, all the activities envisaged in the work plan have been carried out. Of particular significance is the work of the mapping subgroup, which has received ongoing support from (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC as secretariat and the international organizations.

### **3. Description of the activities carried out by the working group**

In pursuit of the goal of promoting and implementing initiatives to support countries in planning and conducting the 2010 round of censuses, the following activities were carried out: technical assistance; workshops on editing, correcting and processing of data, and on living conditions; and a proposal for harmonization of nomenclature. Observation of the 2010 round of censuses was also considered as well as pilot tests from countries including Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay. Countries shared their experiences in mapping and a workshop on harmonization of a minimum set of questions on disability was organized. All scheduled activities were conducted with technical and financial support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other cooperation agencies.

The countries' participation in the above-mentioned activities depended on the stage of development of their respective censuses and their ability to capitalize as efficiently as possible on the experiences and knowledge-sharing. An account of the highlights of the activities organized in 2010 in accordance with the scheduled work plan is given below.

#### **3.1. Workshops and seminars**

##### **3.1.1. Workshop on procedures for editing census data**

Date: 3-6 May 2010

Place: Asunción

Organizers: Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Sixteen representatives of Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Carlos Ellis and Guillem Fortuna, consultants of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), acted as facilitators.

Objective: To enable participants and instructors to share knowledge and experiences in the application of techniques and methodologies, to benefit from discussion of the different problems and practical solutions, and to reach consensus on best practices. The meeting was also an opportunity for experts from the national statistical offices of Latin America to present the techniques and procedures used to edit data obtained in the population and housing censuses.

### **3.1.2. Seminar-workshop “2010 Censuses” and living conditions**

Date: 7-9 June 2010

Place: ECLAC, Santiago

Organizers: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), through the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC, together with the Working Group on Censuses of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), with the support of other international organizations.

Participants: Representatives of Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Uruguay and English-speaking countries.

Objective: The overall objective of the seminar-workshop was to consider the potential of the censuses to produce information for monitoring indicators of the living conditions of the population, to learn about the experiences of the countries of the region in these areas and to present guidelines for the forthcoming censuses.

### **3.1.3. Technical assistance provided to the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay in assisted coding of classifications of economic activities and occupations**

Date: 20-24 September 2010

Place: Asunción

Participants: Technical staff from the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay.

Objective: The objective of the technical assistance, provided as a component of the horizontal cooperation between Paraguay and Peru, was to prepare the main guidelines of a work plan for establishing a system of automatic and assisted coding for the open questions relating to branches of economic activity and occupational groups for the 2012 population census.

The experience of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) of Peru in using a coding system (SICODA) to process open responses on its forms relating to different kinds of statistical research is a model that could be applied to the codification procedures of the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay.

The technical assistance from Peru in automatic and assisted coding and sharing experiences in the use of new classifiers was fundamental and mutually beneficial to both agencies.

#### **3.1.4. Workshop on census data capture and editing using the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro)**

Date: 27 September-1 October 2010

Place: Asunción

Organizers: Department for Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Eighteen representatives of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Puerto Rico. Carlos Ellis and Guillem Fortuna, consultants at the UNFPA Regional Office, acted as facilitators.

Objective: At the request of the countries, to study in greater depth the content examined during the first workshop. The evaluation of the experience testifies to the need to hold workshops of this kind and to the advantages of the methodologies and techniques developed and used by of the different participating countries.

#### **3.1.5. Workshop for sharing experiences in census mapping for the 2010 round of censuses in Latin America**

Date: 27- 29 October 2010

Place: San Cristóbal (Ecuador)

Organizers: National Statistics and Census Institute of Ecuador (INEC) and the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay

Participants: Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

Objective: To share experiences in the use of mapping information in the census process and identify potential areas of cooperation between the statistical offices of the region.

#### **3.1.6. Regional seminar for sharing experiences in classifiers and nomenclatures**

Date: 13-14 December 2010

Place: Santiago

Organizers: Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay and CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC

Participants: Thirty-one representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

Objective: To provide insight into the preparation of inputs from population censuses in the region for the implementation of classifiers of branch of economic activity, occupation and education and to make headway with the harmonization processes by fostering an exchange of experiences between the statistical offices of the region; and to identify areas of cooperation and complementarity in terms of classifiers. One of the main outcomes of the workshop was the countries' request that a working group on nomenclature should be set up within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, with ECLAC as secretariat.

### **3.1.7. Regional seminar on experiences of training population census supervisors and enumerators**

Date: 16-17 May 2011

Place: Santiago

Organizers: Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay and CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC

Participants: Eleven representatives of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Paraguay and Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Objective: To learn about and share strategies for training enumerators and supervisors working on the 2010 census round. These strategies may be under development or may have already been implemented in the country, depending on whether it has already conducted its census. The aim is to share and discuss the main methodologies, technologies, innovations and difficulties.

### **3.1.8. Regional workshop on using census data for demographic evaluation and estimation: Analysing its consistency, quality and coverage**

Date: 1-5 August 2011

Place: Santiago

Organizers: CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Representatives of the national statistical offices of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Mexico and Uruguay. Countries that had already completed their census in 2010 took part as well as countries planning to conduct population and housing censuses between 2011 and 2013, which are currently at the preparation stage.

Objective: To share experiences of the processes of estimating and evaluating the components of demographic trends, and the analysis of internal consistency, quality and coverage of census data so as to boost the capacity of professionals and technicians at national statistical offices to analyse demographic trends during the census evaluation process.

### **3.1.9. Regional workshop on the capabilities and applications of census data**

Date: 17- 26 October 2011

Place: Santiago

Organizers: CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Professionals, technicians and users of census information, ideally with some knowledge of demographic analysis and REDATAM.

Objective: To explore the possibilities of using population and housing censuses to analyse internal and international migration, indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, housing and housing shortages, metropolitan trends, health based on census variables and other sociodemographic indicators, and build institutional capacity to produce studies using this information.

### **3.1.10. Seminar-workshop “2010 Censuses and health”**

Date: 2-4 November 2009

Place: Santiago

Organizers: CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Sixty-seven professionals and experts.

Objective: To consider the methodological aspects of inclusion in the censuses of the 2010 round of health-related issues, such as fertility, child mortality, adult mortality, disability, enrolment in social security programmes and health care, questions on sexual and reproductive health, including maternal mortality, adolescent fertility, prenatal care and attendance at childbirth, and other issues that form part of the Millennium Development Goals. Prior to the workshop, seven reference documents were prepared by researchers from CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC and external consultants on these issues and on inclusion of the gender perspective in Latin American population censuses. These documents are available for consultation on the webpage of CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC, together with the presentations and final report for the event.

### **3.1.11. Regional seminar on dissemination and spatial analysis of census data**

Date: 31 May -3 June 2011

Place: Santiago

Organizers: United Nations Statistics Division in cooperation with CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Participants: Representatives of the national statistical offices.



Objective: To provide a forum for sharing practices and experiences in the dissemination and use of census information. The issues reviewed were emerging trends, innovative approaches, and technological tools used to disseminate census information.

### **3.2. Observation of pilot tests and censuses of the 2010 round Role of pilot tests and housing and population censuses**

#### **3.2.1. Pilot test of Uruguay**

Date: 5-7 October 2010

Place: Montevideo

Organizer: National Institute of Statistics of Uruguay

Participants: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Objective: The focus was on the sharing of experiences with respect to the changes in methodology and technology that Uruguay intends to introduce in the next census, scheduled for 2011 and, in particular, the transition from a de facto to a de jure census and the use of personal digital assistants (PDA) for collecting data in the field.

#### **3.2.2. Pilot test for the 2010 Population and Housing Census in Ecuador**

Date: 26- 28 June 2010

Place: La Troncal, province of Cañar (Ecuador)

Organizer: National Statistics and Census Institute of Ecuador (INEC) of Ecuador, in the context of preparations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses

Participants: Representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC.

Objective: This pilot survey was designed to test on a small scale the functioning of the main instruments, methodology and activities that will form part of the seventh population and sixth housing census. The prime concerns in running the pilot test were to ensure transparency and conduct it in a responsible manner, and to share the knowledge acquired during the preparatory process with international representatives. The whole exercise was geared to improving and strengthening the census process.

#### **3.2.3. Observation of the 2010 Population, Household and Housing Census of Argentina**

Date: 25- 27 October 2010

Place: Buenos Aires

Organizer: National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina

Participants: Representatives of the national statistical offices of Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain and Uruguay.

Objectives: To observe different stages of the census operation (de facto census). Various points of organization and census activity were visited, such as the Ministry of Defence, the Office of the Intendant of the Administrative Area of Merlo, schools, and centres distributing materials and providing area coordination, covering all the entities responsible for organization of the census. The field operation is essentially supported by the teaching structure. From the viewpoint of the international overseers, according to what was observed in the municipalities visited, the census was conducted in a normal manner notwithstanding the situation in Argentina caused by the passing of the former president Néstor Kirchner.

#### **3.2.4. Monitoring of the Demographic Census 2010 of Brazil**

Date: 28- 30 September 2010

Place: Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Organizer: Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE)

Participants: Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Paraguay, Peru, Sao Tome and Principe, United States and Uruguay.

Objective: To observe different phases of the census operation, in particular the use of personal digital assistants (PDAs). Collection stations in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro were visited and an international seminar on new technologies used in population censuses was held to assess the technology used to collect data for the 2010 census and to share experiences of different methodologies.

#### **3.2.5. Monitoring of the 2010 pilot census of Paraguay**

Date: 4-6 October 2011

Place: Asunción

Organizer: Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses of Paraguay, with financial support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

Participants: Twenty-six representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Peru; representatives of CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and IDB.

Objective: To test the operative, methodological, conceptual and technological components of the 2012 national population and housing census. Areas to be tested include the incorporation of portable electronic devices for data capture and a de jure rather than a de facto census operation as has been the tradition in previous decades.

### 3.3. Other activities

- 3.3.1. From 2 December 2009 to 20 February 2010 the workshop on census management was delivered, based on the *Handbook on Census Management for Population and Housing Censuses*,<sup>1</sup> published by the United Nations Statistics Division. The workshop comprised 48 hours in total (divided into 12 hours per week and three four-hour modules). It covered topics such as general management of censuses, national experiences such as that of Chile, operations and processes, the preparatory stage and evaluation.
- 3.3.2. Improving the internal processing modules of the REDATAM software programme. The latest version, Redatam 7, offers improved speed and data compression, a new programming language and superior presentation; a project concept that makes it easier for users to manage their programme, selection, map and document files; standardization/migration to the XML format; Unicode support; new tabulation commands; processing for analysis (MultiTall); and simpler and better supported indicator calculations.
- 3.3.3. Regional intensive course on demographic analysis using census applications. The course was run from 6 June to 30 July 2011 in Panama City and was organized by CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC in cooperation with the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Panama and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The goal was to meet the growing need for training on population issues within the governments of Latin American and Caribbean countries, universities and non-governmental organizations. A total of 25 students took part (52% of them women), 10 from Panama and 15 from other countries in the region.
- 3.3.4. From 20 September to 14 October 2011, CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC, in cooperation with the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Panama and the office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Panama, held the national seminar-workshop on the capabilities and applications of census data in Panama. The goal was to build institutional capacity in the analysis of population censuses, with a focus on the 2010 census round, in studies of population, health and social protection trends, domestic and international migration, metropolitan trends, housing and housing shortages.
- 3.3.5. From 17 to 26 October 2011, the regional workshop on the capabilities and applications of census data<sup>2</sup> will be held in Santiago, aimed at national statistical offices of countries that have already conducted their census for the 2010 round. The goal is to look at analyses that could be performed on the population and housing censuses conducted in Latin America with regard to internal and international migration, indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, housing and housing shortages, metropolitan trends, analysis of health based on census variables and other sociodemographic indicators, and build institutional capacities so that this information can be used in studies.
- 3.3.6. CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC continued to work with the National Statistical Office (ONE) of the Dominican Republic, to train its staff and other national counterparts in demographic analysis. In 2008 and in 2009, staff from the CELADE-Population Division of

<sup>1</sup> ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/83/Rev.1, New York, 2001 [online].[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/handbooks/Series\\_F83/Series\\_F83en.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/standmeth/handbooks/Series_F83/Series_F83en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See [online, in Spanish only] <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/celade/noticias/noticias/1/44371/P44371.xml&xsl=/celade/tpl/p1f.xsl&base=/celade/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>

ECLAC delivered the module on population and development that forms part of the ONE Diploma course on demographic analysis. In addition, in 2010 technical assistance was channelled into developing a new training programme on demographic analysis, specifically on the use of census microdata. This new diploma programme will take the form of dedicated workshops on priority issues as decided by ONE and is open to a range of government departments dealing with that issue. It was launched in May 2011 and phase one has been successfully completed (34 participants, 25 women).

- 3.3.7. CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC has continued to develop the Regional System of Indicators on Ageing (SISE), which contains comparable information for 20 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Data can be processed from two census periods (1990 and 2000) and disaggregated by sex, age group and area of residence. In 2010, the system was updated to include a module containing information on the population estimates and projections prepared by CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC on the number of people aged 60 and over, the percentage of the population aged 60 and over, and population ageing indicators. A specific module was also introduced on dependency and care, including indicators of care dependency, care in old age and the distribution of and trends in the care burden.
- 3.3.8. A databank is now available on the website of CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC (see [online, in Spanish only] [www.cepal.org/celade/indigenas](http://www.cepal.org/celade/indigenas)) on indigenous and Afro-descendent populations in Latin America and the Caribbean. It contains extensive information on indigenous women and reproductive health in 15 countries of the region, along with the corresponding indicators.

#### **4. Future areas of activity**

Following on from the considerable efforts made to implement this work plan, activities are suggested below for inclusion in the next biennial plan.

Most of the censuses relating to the 2010 round were completed during 2010 and 2011. Substantive seminars could be organized to evaluate the round, with an emphasis on sharing lessons learned.

Given the wealth of information that will be available, workshops on using and analysing census data would be very useful, focusing on ways to exploit this information, in particular for the purposes of public policy.

The work plan also included a workshop on using census data for migration analysis. This has been postponed until the first two weeks in March and will be held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). The workshop is intended to communicate the questions gathered on internal migration and international emigration, the methodologies applied and the results obtained in the course of recent census operations in Latin America and the Caribbean, to serve as a framework for establishing guidelines on data analysis. Participants will include representatives of Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Saint Lucia, all countries which have recently completed their respective population censuses. Logistical preparations are already underway and support is being provided by the Knowledge Transfer Network/World Bank and the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE).

Lastly, one extremely useful addition would be workshops on preparing population estimates and projections using the information gathered during the 2010 census round.